2.00 pm.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that a faxed letter has been received from Shri Dilip Singh Judev stating that he is unable to attend the House from 10th to 23rd December, 2008 due to illness. He has, therefore, requested for grant of Leave of Absence from 10th to 23rd December, 2008, of the current (214th) session of the Rajya Sabha.

Does he have the permission of the House for remaining absent till the end of the current session of the Rajya Sabha?

(No hon. Member dissented.)

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Permission to remain absent is granted.

...(Interruptions)...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Zero Hour mentions. *(Interruptions)*... Shri Moinul Hassan. *(Interruptions)*... Shrimati Jaya Bachchan. *(Interruptions)*... Dr. K. Malaisamy. *(Interruptions)*... Shrimati Brinda Karat. *(Interruptions)*... You are to speak on insurance. *(Interruptions)*... You are to speak on insurance. *(Interruptions)*... You have given notice. *(Interruptions)*... Now you are to speak. *(Interruptions)*... Please go there and speak. *(Interruptions)*... She is to speak. *(Interruptions)*...

The House is adjourned till 2.00 p.m.

The House then adjourned at seven minutes past twelve of the clock.

The House reassembled at two of the clock,
MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU (Karnataka): Sir,....*(Interruptions)*.

श्री उपसभापति: आपके लीडर बोल रहे हैं, बैठिए। Let the House be in order.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, we want to raise an issue in regard to the Insurance Bill. *...(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU : Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, in the morning, when the House was going on, you had also witnessed the scene. We do not want to be a party to it. We have our own views on that subject. Every party has got a right to have its own view. This important issue was raised in the House earlier, but not fully. The Government responded by saying in the other House — I am not quoting it — that the Government would make a statement. Sir, it is a very important and serious issue. One after another newspaper, almost all the leading newspapers in the country have raised, discussed and debated this issue about Shri A.R. Antulay's reported observations. He not only reiterated the same, he also said, "The Party should feel proud, the Government also should feel proud of such a statement". Sir, it is an anti-national statement. It is a statement which has broken the unity of the country. The entire country was one. The Government brought a legislation and the opposition supported the Government. There was total unity. The entire country was happy to see this unity in the hour of crisis. In such a situation, an important, responsible and senior Minister, breaching

all the prosperities, makes such a ridiculous statement. Let me quote what the newspapers say. 'Antulay bowls full toss, Pakistan scores'. This is a headline in one of the newspapers. The Times of India says, "Antulay - he must go". Then there is an editorial in the Hindu. Sir, I am not simply going by the editorials of newspapers. The entire country is agitated, worried and concerned. I am not able to understand why the Government is silent on this violent statement of the Minister.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please....

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, kindly permit me. It is a very important issue. It is a joint responsibility. He has made a statement. He might have some personal view. He might have some information also. But he should have raised it in the Cabinet. He should have discussed it in the Cabinet. But by coming out and making a statement and then continue to make a statement and now saying that the Party should be proud of his statement, he has broken all the norms of the Parliamentary democracy, collective responsibility and he has gone against the country's interest. In any other country, such a person would have been fired — fired does not mean physically fired — from the Government; he would have been taken to task. Here is the Minister who has not only behaved in an irresponsible manner, he has also harmed the interest of the country. We have seen the former Prime Minister of the neighbouring country saying, "The terrorists who attacked Mumbai were from Pakistan". Now our Minister puts a question mark. He also talks about a conspiracy. What is happening? Why is the Government silent? We have seen the hon. Minister of External Affairs making some bold statements nowadays, in the last two-three days. We are happy about it. What will be the final conclusion, the country has yet to see. But why is the Government silent on this issue? One of the General Secretaries of the Congress Party, I don't want to name him because he is not here in the House, makes a statement saying, "What is wrong in the statement?" Then this debate goes on. The entire country is shocked and surprised. They are awaiting eagerly that the Government should come out with a statement and the Prime Minister should sack the Minister. If the Congress Party believes in true secularism and unity of the country, they must seek an explanation from the Minister.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let us hear the Government.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Sir, through you, I would request the Government to make a statement on this issue and clarify the matter.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Government has already made a commitment.

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: The Government has not made any statement.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Government is committed to come before the House. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has made a statement....*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, I want to raise an issue....*(Interruptions)*...

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, before the House adjourns tomorrow, some time during the day, the Government will make a statement on the floor of the House, as the Government is committed to make a statement on the floor of the other House.

श्री **विनय कटियार** (उत्तर प्रदेश): स्टेटमेंट कल क्यों देंगे, आज क्यों नहीं?...(व्यवधान)...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir,...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, what is this? ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री **विनय कटियार**: स्टेटमेंट आज क्यों नहीं दे रहे हैं ...(व्यवधान)... आज क्यों नही ....(व्यवधान)...

श्री **उपसभापति**: आप भी गवर्नमेंट में थे... The Government is committed to make a statement. ...**(व्यवधान)**... यह कैसे हो सकता हैं? ...(व्यवधान)... You wanted an assurance from the Government, and the Government has given it. They are duty-bound to do it.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, we have to speak...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: On what?

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Sir, on the Insurance ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I called you. ...*(Interruptions)*... We have admitted your Zero Hour Submission. ...*(Interruptions)*... During the Zero Hour, I called you...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): When? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I called you. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Today? ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes. ...*(Interruptions)*... I called you. ...*(Interruptions)*... I said, 'please speak'. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: What is the urgency of the Insurance issue?

श्री उपसभापति : नहीं, यह बात नहीं है ...**(व्यवधान)**... Please go back to your seats. आप लोग अपने स्थान पर चले जाइए ...**(व्यवधान)**... Please go back to your seats. ...*(Interruptions)*...Please do not do it. ...*(Interruptions)*... Now, we take up the South Asian University Bill, 2008. Shri Pranab Mukherjee to move the Bill.

———————

The South Asian University Bill, 2008

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): Sir, I beg to move:

That the Bill to give effect to the Agreement for the establishment of South Asian University and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, be taken into consideration.

...*(Interruptions)*...

Sir, at the Thirteenth SAARC Summit (Dhaka, 12-13 November 2005), Prime Minister proposed establishing a South Asian University. The Agreement to establish the SAU was signed at the